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essentially as described (Stephenson and Karran, 1989). However, gel electrophoresis was performed in TAE buffer rather than in TBE buffer. To obtain duplex oligonucleotides, the oligonucleotide U: 5'-GGGAAGCTGCCAGGCCCCAGTGTCAGCCTCCTATGCTC-3' (SEQ ID NO:1) (sequences were derived from Aquilina *et al.*, 1994) was radiolabeled and annealed with any of the following unlabeled oligonucleotides: L-G.T: 5'GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACATTGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:2) (resulting in a G.T mismatch); L-G.A: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACAATGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:3) (resulting in a G.A mismatch); L-G.G: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACAGTGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:4) (resulting in a G.G mismatch); L-A.C: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACACCGGGGCCTGGACAGCTTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:5) (resulting in an A.C mismatch); L-TG: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACACTGTGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:6) (resulting in an extrahelical TG dinucleotide); L-HOM: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACACTGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:7) (resulting in a homoduplex); L-LOOP14: 5'-GAGCATAGGAGGCTGACACATACGTGAGTACTCTGGGGCCTGGCAGCTTCCC-3' (SEQ ID NO:8) (resulting in an IDL loop of 14 extrahelical nucleotides). In all assays, a twofold excess of unlabeled homoduplex competitor oligonucleotide was included. As a positive control, a duplex oligonucleotide containing the binding site for the E2F family of transcription factors was used (Beijersbergen *et al.*, 1995).